Glossary of Terms

Accelerator Key See shortcut key

Access Key An alphanumeric key, also referred to as a mnemonic, that when

used in combination with the ALT key navigates to and activates

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a control.

Accessibility

Refers to developing user interfaces that takes the needs of users

with disabilities into account. Accessibility can be divided into two types: direct access and assistive access. See also direct

access and assistive access.

Assistive access

Related to software accessibility where the system supports

specialized software and hardware that aid users with disabilities. For example, specialized input and output

capabilities, such as screen readers, on-screen keyboards, and head-mounted pointers, assist people who are visually impaired, or have difficulty controlling a mouse. See also accessibility and

direct access.

BETSIE Betsie stands for BBC Education Text to Speech Internet

Enhancer, and is a simple Perl script which is intended to alleviate some of the problems experienced by people using text to speech systems for web browsing. For more information, visit

the BETSIE web site at http://www.bbc.co.uk/education/betsie.

Bobby Bobby is a web-based tool that analyzes web pages for their

accessibility to people with disabilities. The Center for Applied Special Technology (CAST) offers Bobby as a free public service in order to further its mission to expand opportunities for people with disabilities through the innovative uses of computer technology. To analyze your web site, type in the URL of the page that you want Bobby to examine and click Submit. Bobby will display a report indicating any accessibility and/or browser compatibility errors found on the page. Once your site receives a

Bobby Approved rating, you are entitled to display a Bobby Approved icon on your site. For more information, visit the

Bobby web site at http://www.cast.org/bobby/.

Browser-safe Refers to a palette of 256 colors that includes 216 colors that are

common across operating systems. Using browser-safe colors

helps eliminate dithering of graphics. See also dithering.

Cascading Menu Sub-menus that are identified within the dropdown menu by a

triangular arrow that appears next to the menu item they belong.

Client-side image map

An image map is a graphic presented on the web where certain areas of the graphic are hyperlinks. An image map that has hyperlinks resolved by the browser on the client's computer (rather than a program on the server) is referred to as a client-side image map. See also server-side image map.

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Color Coding

Using color to draw attention to and assign meaning to certain text or portions of graphics. For example, a list of test results for a patient may have all abnormal results color-coded in red.

Control

Graphic representations of objects such as buttons, list boxes, or text boxes that users manipulate to provide information to the application.

Data Tip

A type of tooltip that displays information about a control on the interface.

Dithering

When an image uses colors that are not browser-safe colors, the colors will appear as many multicolored pixels approximating the original color. This is called dithering. See also browser-safe.

Direct access

The form of accessibility where the interface is developed with accessibility in mind, making the interface more usable to users with mild to moderate disabilities without the need for assistive devices. Examples include keyboard shortcuts and visual cues that augment audible cues. See also accessibility and assistive access.

DPI

Dots Per Inch. A measurement of resolution. 72-dpi is the recommended resolution for online graphics. Print resolutions may vary, depending upon the quality desired. When printing photo quality images, 300-dpi is the minimum recommended.

Expanding Dialog

A dialog style whereby the window expands, typically when a command button is pressed, to expose additional dialog information within the same window.

Frames

Refers to the organization of a web page where the page is divided into different rectangles, where each rectangle is a separate HTML file. Analogous to a window with panes in a Windows interface.

Frameset

The HTML file that describes the set of HTML files that comprise the frames in a web page. When a browser displays a frame on the screen, it interprets the frameset to determine the size, placement and name of each frame in the frameset.

GIF

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Graphical Interchange Format. A graphical file format that uses an indexed form of file compression based on 256 colors. GIF sare best used for graphics with large fields of solid color.

Heuristic Evaluation An evaluation according to a set of rules previously established

> by experts. Heuristic evaluations performed on a user interface may include conformance to user interface standards, ISO guidelines, project specifications, coding standards, and so on.

Hexadecimal The hexadecimal numbering system uses a base of sixteen to

> represent all numbers: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, A, B, C, D, E, F. In computers, a single byte of information can be represented as eight bits (10011101), decimal numerals (913), or simplified to hex (9D). In hex, every byte is shown as two hexadecimal characters. Hexadecimal is used to specify colors in HTML. For example, the hexadecimal equivalent of white is FFFFFF,

while black is 000000. See also RGB.

Hot Key See shortcut key.

Icon Pictorial representation of an object, usually small in size. Icons

are commonly used in toolbars, representing functions like Open,

Save, Print, Cut, Copy, Paste and so on.

Interlaced A property of a GIF image that causes the image to appear on a

> web page occupying the full size of the final image, initially appearing very blurred, then sharpening as the image is completely downloaded. A benefit of interlaced images is that the browser does not have to wait for the image to be fully

downloaded before displaying the rest of the page.

IE Internet Explorer

JPEG Joint Photographic Expert's Group. A file compression format

> developed specifically for photographic images that uses a complex algorithm. JPEG is a lossy compression method.

Letter Descender The part of the letter that extends below the written line.

Descenders are in g, j, p, q, or y.

Lossless Refers to compression of data that does not result loss of data.

The compression used to Zip files is a lossless compression.

Lossy Refers to compression of data that results in the loss of some of

the data. JPEG is a lossy compression.

MDI Multiple Document Interface. An interface that uses a single

primary window, called a parent window, to visually contain a

set of related document or child windows.

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Menu Bar Area displayed across the top of the window directly below the

window title bar containing a menu of functions, such as File,

Edit, View, Help and so on.

Menu Item Each entry in the dropdown menu.

The entries that appear in the menu bar. There is one of these for Menu Title

each dropdown menu.

Objects, actions and terminology taken from the real world that Metaphor

assist the user in transferring knowledge from the real world to

the virtual world.

Modal A term used to describe a window which requires the user to

complete a response or action before any other window can

become active.

Modeless A term used to describe a window that does not require the user

to complete a response or action before they initiate or make

active another window.

Monospace Font Font style in which all letters take up the same amount of space.

Mouse Over Refers to placing the mouse pointer over an image or some other

object on the screen and the image changes or text appears.

NN Netscape Navigator

A separately partitioned part of a window usually separated by a Pane

splitter bar or scroll bar as seen in the Windows Explorer

interface.

Pixels Picture element. A pixel on a monitor is a number of red, green,

> and blue phosphor dots. These dots are "excited" to varying degrees by the monitor's three electron guns, and the results mix additively to generate a specific color. By manipulating large numbers of pixels in precise ways, patterns emerge to make up

an identifiable picture.

Pop-up Menu Another category of menu that is initiated by using the

> alternative button of the mouse. Provides an efficient way for the user to access commands associated with a specific object.

Resolution

A measure of graphics used to describe what a printer can print, a scanner can scan, and a monitor can display. In printers and scanners, resolution is measured in dots per inch (dpi)--the

number of pixels a device can fit in an inch of space. A monitor's resolution refers to the number of pixels in the whole image, because the number of dots per inch varies depending on the screen's dimensions. For example, a resolution of 1,280 by

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1,024 means that 1,024 lines are drawn from the top to the bottom of the screen, and each of these lines is made up of 1,280 separate pixels. Each pixel may have any number of combinations of red, green, and blue intensities. See also pixel, dpi and RGB.

RGB

Red, Green, Blue. The color of a pixel on a computer or television screen is made up of three projected colors of light that mix together optically. Over 16 million colors can be represented as RGB values, with R having a value from 0-255, G having a value from 0-255, and B having a value from 0-255. The RGB value of 000,000,000 represents the color black. The RGB value of 255,255,255 represents the color white. RGB values are represented in hexadecimal in HTML. So the RGB value for black in hexadecimal is 00,00,00, and the RGB value for white in hexadecimal is FF.FF.FF.

Roll Over

See mouse over.

Sans Serif

Means literally "without serifs". Serifs are the little feet attached to a character of type that aid in ease of reading on paper. Serifs make characters harder to read on a computer screen, so the preferred fonts on screens are sans serif fonts such as Verdana, Helvetica, Arial, and Avant Garde.

Scroll bar Tips

A type of tooltip used to display scroll bar location.

SDI

Single Document Interface. An interface that uses a single primary window which may or may not have a set of supplemental secondary windows.

Serif

Serifs are the little feet attached to a character of type that aid in ease of reading on paper. Serifs make characters harder to read on a computer screen Common serif typefaces include Times Roman, Garamond, and Palatino, and Georgia.

Server-side image map

An image map is a graphic presented on the web where certain areas of the graphic are hyperlinks. An image map that has hyperlinks resolved by a program on the server (rather than the browser on the client's computer) is referred to as a server-side image map. See also client-side image map.

Shortcut Key

Key or key combinations, also referred to as hot keys or accelerator keys, that when pressed provide quick access to frequently performed functions.

Split SDI

An interface that a single primary window that has a window splitter, with the option of a menu bar, toolbar, and status bar.

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Sticky Keys Option Setting the Sticky Keys option enables the user to press the keys

one at a time (e.g., Ctrl-Alt-Delete).

Supplemental Dialog A dialog style whereby an additional and separate window is

presented to expose additional dialog information pertaining to

the first window.

Tooltip Pop-up windows that provide brief context sensitive help. These

are primarily for use on toolbars to clarify the meaning of toolbar

icons.

Twips A screen independent unit used to ensure that placement and

> proportion of screen elements in your screen application are the same on all screens. A twip is a unit of measurement equal to 1/20 of a printer's point. There are 1440 twips per logical inch;

567 twips per logical centimeter.

Usability The effectiveness, efficiency, and satisfaction with which a

specified set of users achieve a specified set of tasks in a

particular environment.

Visual Affordance The visual properties of an object that provide clues about how

> to use or operate it. For example, doors generally have hinges and door handles that provide clues as to which way it opens,

and how to open it.